

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding grounds of rejection is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the remarks that follow.

At the outset, applicants note the cancellation of non-elected claims 4-10 reserving the right to file a divisional application to protect the subject matter of the non-elected claims.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the acknowledged prior art in view of Williams (US 2,657,902), Durgin (GB 2,054,749 A) and Field (US 4,672,727) for the reasons stated on pages 3 and 4 of the Official Action. By this Amendment, applicants have amended claim 1 to require that the coupon trailing edge portion has a plurality radially spaced openings connected to a radially extended plenum. In addition, it is now required that the radially spaced ribs extending between opposite pressure and suction sides of the coupon are shaped to form radially spaced flow channels for directing cooling air to the plenum.

In setting forth the rationale for the rejection, the Examiner relies on Durgin for showing that ribs or pins are conventionally used between the pressure and suction sides of air flows to provide mechanical stability and to induce turbulent flow to maximize cooling effectiveness.

None of the references cited by the Examiner, whether taken alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the combination of cooling openings, radially extending plenum, and ribs that form flow channels directing air to the plenum. In Durgin, the pins 46, as correctly noted by the Examiner, bide mechanical stability and also induce turbulent flow and air flowing through the slit 18 at the trailing edge of the blade. The ribs 46, however, are not arranged to direct cooling air to a radially extending plenum that, in turn, distributes air to the exit openings along the

trailing edge of the blade. Accordingly, the references as combined fail to establish prima facie obviousness with respect to any of claims 1-3.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over the acknowledged prior art in view of Jackson (US 2002/0197152), Jackson (US 2003/0082048), or Mendham (US 5,269,057) and further in view of William, Durgin and Field, for the reasons stated on pages 5 and 6 of the Official Action. In this second ground of rejection, the Examiner again relies upon Durgin and its disclosure of pins 46. For the same reasons presented above, Durgin does not disclose or suggest the combination of ribs that form flow channels for directing cooling air to a radially extending plenum as required by amended claim 1. Accordingly, this second ground of rejection also fails to establish prima facie obviousness with respect to any of claims 1-3.

The application is now in condition for allowance, and early passage to issue is respectfully requested. In the event, however, any small matters remain outstanding, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned so that the prosecution of this application can be expeditiously concluded.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fee(s) filed, or asserted to be filed, or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Account No. 14-1140.

Respectfully submitted,

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